



the

Branson Briefs

A

monthly e-Newsletter for

community providing information
about upcoming activities, projects and events in the city of Branson

Volume I, Issue 9

October 2009

City of Branson
110 W. Maddux
Branson, MO 65616
417-334-3345
417-334-6095 fax
www.bransonmo.gov

Hours

8-a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Mayor

Raeanne Presley

Board of Aldermen

Stan Barker
Cris Bohinc
Rick Davis
Stephen Marshall
Bob Simmons
Sandra Williams

City Administrator

Dean Kruithof

Board of Aldermen meeting schedule

2nd & 4th Tuesday
of each month
7 p.m.
Council Chambers
City Hall

October is

**Fire
Prevention
Month**



Finishing touches are being applied to the north end of Fall Creek Road where it intersects with Roark Valley Road. Fall Creek opens to traffic October 10.

Fall Creek Road opens October 10

Branson will be holding a street party to officially open the Fall Creek Road extension on Saturday, October 10, beginning at 9 a.m. There will be entertainment, food, Duck rides and classic cars on hand for the festivities. Mayor Raeanne Presley will lead a parade of classic cars and cut the ribbon at 10:30 that morning to open the road to traffic.

The new Fall Creek extension connects Highway 76 with James Epps Road at the Roark Valley intersection. The three lane road will allow motorists to travel from Highway 248 all the way south to Missouri Highway 165 by the Fall Creek Steakhouse. Highway 165 continues to Table Rock Dam. Fall Creek Road provides another major north /south thoroughfare through Branson.

City employee recognized for Fall Creek work

Roger Clark, project manager in the Branson Engineering Department, received the September Employee of the Month award for his efforts in beautifying the new Fall Creek Road extension.

He took an unsightly mud seam in a rock cut along the road and landscaped it with mulch and shrubbery. E-S-S, the general contractor for the road, provided the materials and Clark spent the extra hours to improve the appearance of that area.



Roger Clark receives the Employee of the Month plaque from Alderperson Cris Bohinc.



2010 Budget totals \$62 million

The Branson Board of Aldermen has approved the city's 2010 budget and it totals \$62 million. The budget year begins January 1. While the 2010 budget appears to be larger than the current \$56 million budget, city officials say the spending has not changed, only the way it's recorded.

The city has changed how it records Tax increment Financing (TIF) information. In the past, the city's budget has not reflected TIF money and now it will. Adding the fund balance of the TIF to the current financial statements will increase the fund balance. The 2010 budget is conservative and city officials are not anticipating growth in revenue.

The only hiring will be two police dispatchers and one part-time position in the city clerk's office becoming full time.

Expenditures include \$300,000 to build an addition to city hall for the city clerk's office and police department; \$200,000 for property maintenance and demolition in the planning and development department and \$54,000 for more Christmas lighting displays along West Highway 76.

Ozark Mountain Christmas kicks off November 1

Beginning November 1, the Branson/Lakes Area Transforms into a festive wonderland. Spectacular lighting displays, dazzling shows celebrating the holidays, theme parks in all their holiday glory and numerous special events make this the most wonderful time of the year.



Citizens' Service Request Line

If you need a question answered about the city, or need to report a problem or express a concern, contact the Citizens' Service Request line at 337-8502. The line is open 24/7 and the city will respond to your request within five working days.

You can also e-mail a request from the city of Branson website www.bransonmo.gov.

In 2008, the city received and responded to 179 citizen requests.



Community Garage Sale & Farmers Market

Saturday October 17
7 a.m.— noon
Branson RecPlex
1500 Branson Hills Pky
\$15 fee for
18' x 18'
Area
335-2368 for details

Daylight savings time
ends Sunday,
November 1



Turn your clocks back
one hour and check
your smoke detector
batteries

Branson Airport adds flights for holidays



The Branson Airport has announced the addition of new flights to and from Shreveport, LA and Rockford, Ill scheduled from November 7 through December 14. For more information on schedules and special ticket prices, go to www.FlyBranson.com. This year marks the 22nd season for Ozark Mountain Christmas.

Public works director retires after 33 years



Branson Public Works Director Larry VanGilder has announced his retirement effective January 8, 2010. VanGilder was hired as a wastewater plant operator in 1976 and became the public works director in 1983. Public works is the largest city department with 68 employees. VanGilder is the longest serving public works director in the city's history.

He said his biggest accomplishment was managing the growth of the city especially during the 1990s and keeping up with the water and wastewater systems.

"My years in Branson have been a very rewarding experience," he said.

City reorganizing public works department

With the retirement of VanGilder, city officials will be reorganizing the public works department. Engineering will be managing street maintenance, facilities maintenance, vehicle service, mowing, and recycling. Current City Engineer David Miller will take on the new title of City Engineer/ Public Works Director. The public works division dedicated to city park maintenance will shift to the Parks and Recreation Department under the directorship of Cindy Shook.

The other change is creating a separate Utilities Department that will be responsible for functions like water and sewer treatment, distribution and meter reading. Heading that department will be a new position, Utilities Director. Right now, Mike Ray, the division head of the Water and Wastewater Treatment Division in Public Works, will serve as interim director. Kruithof said the city will conduct a nationwide search for a permanent utilities director, but that does not preclude filling the position internally.

Convention center update

The tough economy has forced businesses and corporations to rein in travel expenses and conventions and that has impacted the Branson Convention Center. Through June, revenues are below the projected budget by \$279,000. However, despite the lower revenues, the center is still ahead of its overall budget by \$191,000 through the first six months of '09.

Convention center officials say they have been able to control losses and expenses and bring more money to the bottom line. The convention center has not filled some open positions as well as cutting advertising expenses.

Through June, the convention center has hosted 115 event days compared to 112 event days during the same time last year.

Landing receives state award

Branson Landing received the 2009 Director's Redevelopment Award sponsored by the Missouri Governor's Conference on Economic Development. The annual award is given by the state to recognize the best example of a redevelopment project that had a significant impact on the neighborhood or community.

Branson veterans clinic opens

Dedication ceremonies were held to open the new Branson Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) for veterans at 5571 North Gretna Road. The CBOC offers 23,312 square feet of expanded primary care, mental health, audiology, optometry and home based primary care.

Five veteran military physicians own the clinic property and are partnering with the Veterans Administration to provide this outpatient medical care for veterans.



Cost for new Taneycomo Bridge under expectations

Bids coming to MoDOT for the new bridge are about 20 percent under expectations, according to officials of the Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT). People want business now, so it's a good time to bid.

MoDOT will accept a bid by Nov. 4, and work could begin immediately, but must begin by mid-December.

The first work likely will be to blast a 20-foot deep cut in the south-side cliff, which will stair-step to the top. The work will be done under traffic with small blasts and small dump trucks. The blasted material likely will be loaded and trucked across the bridge to provide fill for the new bridge pilings on the north side.

The contractor is allowed to stop traffic for up to 15 minutes. After that, the contractor is fined \$96 per minute of delay.



Concept unveiled for proposed nature center

Great River Engineering of Springfield presented a detailed concept of a nature center that would be built with sustainable material and incorporate green features.

The proposed nature center would be located on four acres at the corner of highway 76 and Fall Creek Road, and serve as the entrance to the existing 130 acre Lakeside Forest Wilderness Area

The facility would be informational, educational, demonstrate energy saving conservation methods and serve as a center for nature related programs.

The design includes a sloped roof, two-story building that, along with a permeable paved parking lot, would collect rainwater for recycling as irrigation, a waterfall and water for flushing toilets.

The next step in moving this facility forward is to develop a mission statement and identify funding sources. The proposed nature center is at least a three year project.



An expression of appreciation is in order for 125 Branson Junior High students that participated in a cleanup day at six local parks. The students picked up trash, remulched the playgrounds and flower beds, painted park facilities, cleaned equipment and greatly improved the appearance of the parks.

Sustainability Education Classes

Branson Environmental Specialist Mona Menezes will be conducting a series of educational classes on "sustainability" for the Board of Aldermen, city leaders and general public.

The sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. prior to the regular Board of Aldermen meetings starting October 13 and continuing through Tuesday, December 8.

Topics include the definition of sustainability, creating green buildings, sustainable cities, and sustainable transportation.

The sessions include outside speakers.



Branson Mayor all a-twitter

Want to get text messages about events and issues important to our community from Branson Mayor Raeanne Presley's perspective? Then you need to become a "Twitter" person and sign up to follow the mayor's comments.

Mayor Presley has opened an account on Twitter with her address being <http://twitter.com/bransonmayor>. Citizens can search for the mayor at www.twitter.com, and sign up to follow the mayor's comments.

Twitter is a micro blogging service. When you sign up, you can post very small messages, 140 characters or less, to a group of people who "follow" you. Think of it as text messaging to a group of people with the idea of answering the question "What are you doing and thinking right now?"